

human lives that lie behind the numbers are a call to action for every person on the planet and for every government."

He is right.

Our nation has begun to heed that call, but our commitment to beating back this disease and our compassion for the millions who now suffer—compel us to do much, much more.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CARNAHAN). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I thank the distinguished leader for the assistance he has given, together with the Republican leader, in moving this bill forward. I am going to address the Senate momentarily on an aspect of this bill, I say to the majority leader, and then he can give us guidance as to when this bill can be set aside.

Parliamentary inquiry: It is this Senator's understanding the Senate is in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WARNER. I ask unanimous consent we return to consideration of the bill so I may address certain sections of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. At the conclusion of my remarks, I request we again lay aside the bill and return to morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003—Continued

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, periodically I have addressed the Senate on my concerns regarding the tragic strife in the Middle East. I did so on May 2 of this year and in the RECORD of that day are my comments with regard to the situation as of that date. Regrettably, the situation has continued to worsen.

Our President is actively engaged with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. I have had the opportunity to speak to all of them about this situation and express my views.

I know of no conflict of recent times that is more serious, in terms of how its tentacles are far reaching throughout the world. It is affecting, in some way, our ability to pursue terrorism worldwide. It is affecting our ability to take further actions to bring about our goals in Afghanistan. It is affecting the planning that this Nation must make from time to time—not referring to war plans, but just planning—as to how we deal with Iraq. Iraq is continuing, under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, to manufacture and warehouse weapons of mass destruction. I think the facts are irrefutable.

At the core of all of this decision making is this continuing conflict in the Middle East. I have said and I will

say again today that I urge those in positions of authority—whether in this country, in Israel, or in the Palestinian Authority—to look at this daily loss of life on both sides and do all they can to bring about a cessation of this tragic conflict.

Eventually the two sides will sit down and try to work out some agreement for a lasting and permanent peace. A number of us had the opportunity to visit with President Mubarak when he came to Washington a few weeks ago. Likewise, a number of us had the opportunity to visit with President Sharon when he recently visited. I recognize the Presiding Officer was involved in those consultations. However, it seems to this Senator that President Mubarak and President Sharon are miles apart in their views as to how to bring about a resolution of this conflict.

I read today that certain persons in our Government are trying to impress upon several nations, which have been actively involved in trying to bring about peace in the Middle East, to become more active—specifically with Arafat, to impress upon him the need to exercise his authority to stop this tragic killing.

At the same time, there are certain elements within the Israeli Government that want nothing to do with Arafat. So on the one hand, people are going to Arafat to try to get him to do something and, on the other hand, people are saying we would not deal with him even if he were to do something.

Much of his infrastructure has been eroded in this conflict. We know not, at least this country does not, what exactly is the political structure among the Palestinian people and their ability to convey through Arafat, or another leader, their views towards a cessation of hostilities.

But this brings me to the question regarding NATO and the admission of new countries. Yesterday I had the distinct privilege, along with other Senators, to welcome in the Senate all 19 Ambassadors from the NATO nations who have convened here in Washington for a series of meetings with our Government. It is a very interesting group.

I said to them, in all candor: I am now in my 24th year in the Senate and I am a strong supporter of NATO. I said that they are the trustees of the NATO of the future. That alliance has been the most successful military alliance in the contemporary history of mankind. It has achieved its goals.

On the 50th anniversary of NATO, the leaders of NATO convened here in Washington. At that time they added a provision to their charter which clarifies any doubt that NATO has the authority, subject to the concurrence of the member nations, to engage in this war on terrorism and to selectively go into areas of dispute to perform crisis response operations.

I said to them, quite candidly, that they should entertain the thought that, should NATO be invited by the

Government of Israel, and such spokesmen or government as may exist amongst the Palestinians, to come in and provide a peacekeeping force, that they should seriously entertain whether or not NATO could carry out that mission.

NATO has done it with professional excellence in the Balkans, both in Bosnia and Kosovo. It is quite interesting that among the beneficiaries of those peacekeeping operations have been a significant proportion of the Muslim population. So NATO has clearly established in Kosovo and Bosnia, an opportunity for the people in those countries to come together and begin to form a government that will improve their quality of life, certainly an improvement from what I witnessed when I first went there in the fall of 1991 and saw of the ravages of war.

I explained this yesterday to those Ambassadors. I also said the following.

I can remember the days right in this Chamber when there were heated debates, particularly after the dramatic fall of the Berlin Wall. That wall came down. Ronald Reagan is to be credited in history for being instrumental in getting that wall to come down, ending the cold war and hastening the demise of the Soviet Union.

I can remember the people of the United States through their elected representatives saying, Should we not now lessen our contributions to NATO? And they are very significant dollar contributions, and leadership, manpower, and equipment.

In this bill that we are on right now is \$200 million and a fraction of new taxpayer money—\$205 million for the military budget of NATO. That follows approximately \$50 million in assistance authorized and appropriated by this Chamber several months ago in the context of the Freedom Consolidation Act.

In this one fiscal year alone—it may be two, and I will have to check that—roughly \$255 million. That is a significant contribution by our taxpayers. And, that doesn't even begin to capture the costs the American taxpayers bear in keeping over 100,000 military personnel permanently stationed in the European theater.

I said to those Ambassadors that this year there will be strong support for the NATO budget, as there should be. NATO is doing a remarkable job in the Balkans and elsewhere. We are strong supporters.

But also in the Senate yesterday, history was made. The Senate is roughly 214 years old. It was the first time that in one hearing room—the Armed Services Committee where I was present—under the advise and consent procedure, we were hearing from a prominent four-star officer nominated to become commander in chief of the Northern Command—a new command established primarily for the purpose of protecting the citizens of our 50 States, and coordinating the use of our U.S. military to protect our States. Stop to

think. This Nation has felt itself secure behind two great oceans for those 214 years of our Senate—secure because of the strong relationships we have to the north with Canada, and to the south with Mexico and our Central and South American neighbors. But our President has wisely concluded—and I commend and support him—we must set up a separate military command for the purposes of protecting the citizens of our 50 States.

In another hearing room was a distinguished civilian witness—Governor Tom Ridge, the President's Homeland Security Adviser—introducing a proposed Department of Homeland Security, the head of which will have the responsibility of marshaling the assets of this Nation's military, intelligence, police, National Guard, and all types of coordination required, again to protect citizens in their homes, in their towns, in their villages, and in the cities of the United States of America.

That was a profound day yesterday—a very profound crossroads in the history of this country.

As I talked with the NATO Ambassadors, I felt compelled to make the point that our country is placing additional burdens upon its taxpayers to protect us here at home with this new military command and this new Cabinet position, an entirely new entity of the Federal Government.

It is to be an amalgamation of some 150 different entities, and that will change as we debate its ultimate composition. But the bottom line is, our people are properly looking to this Government under our able President to begin in earnest to marshal all of our assets, as we have been doing for some months now since 9-11—but begin in earnest to establish a military command and a Cabinet position, adding great expenditures to our national defense needs.

Our President, the Congress and the American people know homeland security is our most urgent priority. We pray that the steps we are taking to prevent further attacks will be successful. But, if there are further attacks, our people will look inward more and more to their defensive needs here at home.

What are these threats that are requiring establishment of a new military command, and a new Cabinet department? These threats are the manifestation of a centuries-old ethnic and religious differences, including small elements of radical, fundamentalist Muslims whose message of hatred and intolerance for the United States and the West has found resonance amongst discouraged Middle Eastern youth. The unending cycle of violence in the Middle East fuels this sense of despair.

We should leave no stone untouched to determine the roots of this hatred. Are there steps we can take to demonstrate to the discouraged residents of the Middle East that we are a peaceful nation that fights for democracy, freedom and individual rights? Never in

the history since the formation of our Republic have our troops marched beyond the shores of this Nation to acquire and take the lands of others. To the contrary, each and every time they have marched, they have marched in the cause of freedom to end tyranny and aggression and restore rights to oppressed peoples.

That is what this Nation stands for. We respect those who pursue the Muslim faith, as we respect the right of all to pursue their faith without fear of persecution. We are fortunate in this Nation to have hundreds and hundreds of thousands of persons who have emigrated from the Muslim nations of the world to follow the Muslim faith, to come to our United States and take up citizenship and to participate with equal vigor and enthusiasm in our way of life and the goals of this Nation. We are very proud to have them here.

I think we have to begin to send a message to that part of the world in every way we possibly can. There exists a very skillfully set up means of communication, primarily through one television station that is followed every day by many in the Arab world which portrays and misrepresents this Nation to the Arab world. It exploits the sense of discouragement that exists in the region and engenders more and more ferment, which is then directed at Israel and the West, but most specifically, at our Nation.

The conflict in the Middle East between Israel and the Palestinian people generates—I cannot quantify it, but that seemingly unending conflict generates hatred that grows and multiplies in the Arab world and is ultimately directed towards this country. That is why I think we should look at every single resource available to us to try to bring about the cessation of those hostilities, while simultaneously encouraging governments in the region to bring truth, democracy and opportunity to their nations. I believe it would lessen some measure of the hatred being directed to this country—hatred which results in daily and weekly threats and warnings to the American people.

I believe NATO should examine for itself whether or not it could play a role, if it were invited by both sides to come in, and provide a peacekeeping role to enable the two warring factions to sit down over a period of time—in relative peace, secured by capable NATO peacekeepers who are credible to both sides and engender cooperation—and, hopefully, resolve their differences and have a lasting peace agreement.

I said that very clearly to these Ambassadors yesterday. I have said it on the floor of this Senate. I will continue to say it on the floor of the Senate. Because as we approach this issue of the new nations joining NATO—and I have been active in the past, and I will be active in the future—those nations I think primarily are focused on what NATO can do for them to give them protection within their own specific geographic areas.

I am not entirely sure what the threats are that most concern these nations aspiring to NATO membership. Europe basically is peaceful today, but they look to NATO to ensure their protection as sovereign nations. That they should do. But, are they equally prepared to contribute to the military organizations in NATO.

The Senate, for that purpose, authorized \$55 million to help the aspirant nations improve their militaries to meet the standards established by NATO for new members. That is a very important process.

I have always believed in the past that perhaps we moved too quickly in inviting new nations to join NATO, but I will put that aside for the moment. But I do ask those aspirant nations to begin to focus on the trouble spots in Europe, the trouble spots in the Middle East, and say to themselves, if NATO were to become involved: Are we willing to shoulder our proportionate part of the responsibilities which could involve our troops becoming peacekeepers in the Middle East? Stop to think about that.

I believe, in the course of the deliberations on NATO enlargement, those questions should be put specifically to the aspirant nations desiring to join. I commend our Ambassador, Ambassador Burns, U.S. Ambassador to NATO. He is extraordinarily well schooled, a highly principled professional, devoting his life to diplomacy. He is the right man at the right time in that particular job.

So, Mr. President, I feel very strongly about this. I know my views are not shared at the moment. Perhaps the President will take cognizance of this proposal as he is preparing his very important message on the Middle East. However, I just think there is no corner of this problem that should not be fully explored before it is summarily rejected.

We are making a very significant contribution to NATO. It is important. Hopefully, we will do it again next year. But in the ensuing year, as we begin to prepare ourselves here at home, all of the dollars of our budget then become under greater scrutiny.

I think it would be important for NATO to at least consider—on the assumption that it is invited—a peacekeeping role in the Middle East. However, it cannot be forced upon the people of Israel; they are very proud of their ability to defend themselves. However, I think it is important that this proposal be considered by NATO and that the nations indicating a desire to join NATO are likewise consulted as to their views.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.